

Message Text

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S E C R E T ATHENS 4346

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: MARR, MOPS, GR, US

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY TO AVEROFF RE RECONNAISSANCE OPERATIONS

FROM ATHENS

REF: DIRNSA 230112Z MAY 75

1. GREEK PRESS RECENTLY CARRIED SEVERAL STORIES CONCERNING OPERATIONS OF "US SPY PLANES" FROM ATHENS AIRPORT. PRESS INTEREST RAPIDLY DISSIPATED AND USIS RECEIVED NO REQUESTS FOR COMMENT, BUT THE OPPOSITION IN PARLIAMENT HAS CALLED UPON DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF TO EXPLAIN HOW THESE "SPY PLANES" CONTRIBUTE TO GREEK DEFENSE INTERESTS. OF PARTICULAR CONCERN IS A CHARGE THAT THESE AIRCRAFT WERE MONITORING THE HOSTILITIES ON CYPRUS LAST JULY AND AUGUST.

2. ON JUNE 12 THE HELLENIC AIR FORCE DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE REQUESTED THE AIR ATTACHE TO MEET WITH HIM JUNE 13 AT 1000 LOCAL. PURPOSE OF MEETING IS TO DRAFT A REPLY FOR MINISTER AVEROFF TO RESPOND TO ABOVE PARLIAMENTARY REQUEST, PERHAPS WITHOUT AVEROFF'S KNOWLEDGE OF AIRATT'S PARTICIPATION.

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3. WE HOLD REFTTEL WHICH SUGGESTS RESPONSE TO PRESS QUERIES BE DRAWN FROM THE UNCLASSIFIED MISSION STATEMENT OF THE LOCAL USAF SECURITY SERVICE SQUADRON. HOWEVER, AS STATEMENT IMPLIES ONLY A COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY FUNCTION, WE DOUBT THAT AVEROFF WILL FIND IT CREDIBLE ENOUGH TO USE. WE BELIEVE IT IS IN OUR INTEREST TO SHAPE THE GOG'S ANSWER SO THAT IT WOULD BE MORE PLAUSIBLE, AND THUS MORE LIKELY TO BE USED BY AVEROFF, THAN THE PRESENT UNCLASSIFIED MISSION STATEMENT, WHICH APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN SHAPED FOR RESPONSE TO PUBLIC OR PRESS INQUIREIES. WE PROPOSE TO HAVE AIRATT ON STRICTLY INFORMAL, UNOFFICIAL BASIS, PROVIDE TO HIS STAFF AS PROPOSED RESPONSE AVEROFF MIGHT MAKE TO PARLIAMENTARY QUERY STATEMENT SET FORTH IN PARA 4 BELOW. REQUEST COMMENT/CLEARANCE SOONEST.

4. QUOTE. MANY U.S. MILITARY AIRCRAFT OPERATE THROUGH GREECE, AND OCCASIONALLY FROM GREECE. PRIOR TO CONDUCTING SPECIFIC MILITARY FLIGHT, THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT SUBMITS A DETAILED REQUEST SPECIFYING THE TYPE AIRCRAFT, ROUTE TO BE FLOWN AND PURPOSE OF THE FLIGHT. IN CONSIDERING AND ACTING

ON THESE REQUESTS, THE GOVERNMENT TAKES FULLY INTO ACCOUNT GREEK NATIONAL INTERESTS.

A FEW OF THE APPROVED FLIGHTS ARE CONDUCTED BY C-135 AND P-3 RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT OPERATING FROM ATHENS. THESE FLIGHTS OPERATE ONLY OVER INTERNATIONAL WATERS IN SUPPORT OF MUTUAL US-GREEK DEFENSE INTERESTS. THESE OPERATIONS ARE MONITORED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HELLENIC ARMED FORCES WHO HAVE ACCESS TO THE AIRCRAFT AND GROUND SUPPORT FACILITIES. END QUOTE. KUBISCH

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